

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1488

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, NATO

SUBJECT: THE LEFT AND NATO: DISSIDENT COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER LEONIDAS

KIRKOS ENDORSES CONTINUED GREEK PARTICIPATION

IN THE POLITICAL SIDE OF NATO

1. GREECE'S CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL SIDE OF NATO RECEIVED A PUBLIC ENDORSEMENT FROM AN UNLIKELY CORNER, LEONIDAS KIRKOS, LEADER OF THE DISSIDENT INTERIOR COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREECE. KIRKOS' ENDORSEMENT OF GREECE'S NATO LINK CAME IN THE CONTEXT OF A WIDE-RANGING INTERVIEW WITH A LOCAL PAPER (AKROPOLIS-FEBRUARY 15).

2. THE INTERIOR PARTY LEADER STATED "THE MOMENT IS NOT APPROPRIATE" FOR GREECE TO WITHDRAW FROM NATO'S POLITICAL SIDE. KIRKOS MADE THIS REMARK AS HE SPECIFICALLY REJECTED ANDREAS PAPANDREOU'S CONTINUED CALL FOR GREECE'S TOTAL WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO. PAPANDREOU HAS MADE SUCH WITHDRAWAL AN ELEMENT IN PROPOSING A "MINIMAL" COMMON PROGRAM FOR ALL PARTIES OF THE OPPOSITION TO ENDORSE. KIRKOS SAID THAT PAPANDREOU'S CONTINUAL SLOGANEERING ON THE SUBJECT OF NATO IGNORES "THE DANGERS LYING IN

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THE PATH OF GREEK DEMOCRACY...WE ARE STILL WALKING IN

A MINE FIELD."

3. THE "MINES" THAT KIRKOS SEES THAWART GREECE'S DEMOCRATIC FUTURE ARE NOT WELL DEFINED IN THE INTERVIEW. BUT HIS REMARKS SUGGEST THAT HE PERCEIVES A NATO LINK AS BOTH A BALANCE TO THE THREAT HE PERCEIVES FROM TURKEY AS WELL AS TO THE DANGER OF POLITICAL INTERVENTION BY THE GREEK MILITARY.

4. BUT WHATEVER KIRKOS' REASONS, IT IS CLEAR THAT HE IS NOT READY TO LEND HIS WEIGHT AND THAT OF HIS PARTY TO THE EFFORTS OF ANDREAS AND THE MOSCOW ALIGNED COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE EXTERIOR TO PROPEL GREECE ENTIRELY OUT OF NATO. THUS WHILE KIRKOS IS NOT PUSHING FOR THE REINTEGRATION OF GREECE INTO THE MILITARY ARM OF NATO, HIS PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS OF OPPOSITION TO ANY FURTHER WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ALLIANCE ARE A USEFUL BRAKE ON ANY MOMENTUM IN THAT DIRECTION.
KUBISCH

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